

NPL Site Narrative for Kerr-McGee (Reed-Keppler Park)

KERR-McGEE (REED-KEPPLER PARK) West Chicago, Illinois

Federal Register Notice: [August 30, 1990](#)

Conditions at proposal (October 15, 1984): The Kerr-McGee (Reed-Keppler Park) Site is in Reed-Keppler Park in West Chicago, Illinois. About 15,000 people live within 3 miles of the site.

In 1931, Lindsay Light & Chemical Co. established a mill called the "Rare Earths Facility" in West Chicago for the extraction of thorium and nonradioactive elements from monazite and other ores. Later, the property was used for the manufacture of gaslight mantles (which contain thorium), mesothorium, and, during World War II, hydrofluoric acid. Ownership of the facility changed from Lindsay to American Potash & Chemical in 1958 and to Kerr-McGee Chemical Corp. in 1967. Operations at the property continued until 1973, when Kerr-McGee, the current owner, closed the facility.

Radioactive materials were landfilled in what is now Reed-Keppler Park at an 11-acre site, which had apparently been a gravel quarry. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's contractor located contaminated areas within the landfill and around and under tennis courts adjacent to it. Contaminated material around (not under) the tennis courts was excavated and moved onto an area of surface contamination, which was

then fenced and posted.

Status (June 10, 1986): Because of an administrative error during the public comment period, EPA is extending the comment period on this site for an additional 60 days.

Status (August 30, 1990): The excavated material is still in the park, for the most part within the fenced area. Some "hot spots" with elevated radiation levels remain around the tennis courts.

[The description of the site (release) is based on information available at the time the site was evaluated with the HRS. The description may change as additional information is gathered on the sources and extent of contamination. See [56 FR 5600](#), February 11, 1991, or subsequent FR notices.]